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MAINTENANCE OF INTERNATIONAL SECURITY

Letter dated 10 October 1997 from the Permanent Representative of Bulgaria to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit herewith the text of the joint statement adopted at the meeting of the Ministers of Defence of South-eastern European Partnership for Peace participating States, regional North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) members Greece and Turkey, and NATO members Italy and the United States of America, held at Sofia on 3 October 1997.

I have the further honour to request that the text of the present letter and its annex be circulated as a document of the General Assembly under agenda item 81.

(Signed) Philip DIMITROV
Representative and Ambassador
of the Republic of Bulgaria
to the United Nations

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Annex

MEETING OF THE MINISTERS OF DEFENCE OF SOUTH-EASTERN EUROPEAN PARTNERSHIP FOR PEACE PARTICIPATING STATES, REGIONAL NATO MEMBER STATES GREECE AND TURKEY, AS WELL AS NATO MEMBERS ITALY AND THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

SOFIA, 3 OCTOBER 1997

JOINT STATEMENT

1. The Ministers of Defence of South-Eastern European Partnership for Peace[1] participating states, regional NATO member states Greece and Turkey, as well as NATO members Italy and the United States of America: Mr. Gueorgui ANANIEV, Mr. Sabit BROKAJ, Mr. Lazar KITANOSKI, Mr. Apostolos TSOHATZOPOULOS, Mr. Beniamino ANDREATTA, Mr. Victor BABIUC, Mr. Tit TURNSEK, Mr. Ismet SEZGIN and Mr. William COHEN, the representative of the Secretary General of NATO Ambassador Klaus-Peter KLAIBER, the Representative of the Chairman-in-Office of the OSCE Ambassador William FRIIS-MOLLER and the Representative of the Secretary General of WEU Mr. Peter HESSE met in Sofia on 3 October 1997.

2. Representatives of the Ministers of defence of Belgium, Canada, The Czech Republic, Denmark, France, Germany, Hungary, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Spain, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom also attended the meeting as observers.

3. Guided by the objectives and the purposes of the process started with the March 1996 Tirana Defence Ministerial and continuing it in the spirit of the Madrid declaration on Euro- Atlantic security and cooperation and the inauguration of the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council;

4. Recalling the spirit of relevant chapters of the Sofia and Thessaloniki Declarations on Good-Neigbourly Relations, Stability, Security and Cooperation in the Balkans, adopted by the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the Countries of South-Eastern Europe;

5. Aiming to strengthen and broaden the stability and security in the region of South-Eastern Europe, thus contributing to achieve just and lasting order of peace based on human rights, freedom and democracy for Europe as a whole;

6. Reaffirming their commitment to the Euro-Atlantic values which will guide their individual and collective policies;

7. The Ministers confirm their governments' determination to promote good neighbourly relations and constructive cooperation in the field of defence and security among participating states.

8. The Ministers believe that the strong and dynamic transatlantic link will remain the bedrock of the European security and stability and the main guarantee for a free and

[1] Hereinafter referred to as PfP.

prosperous Europe. They share the view that NATO continues to be the major driving force in the construction of an inclusive European security architecture in close cooperation with the WEU thus contributing to the building of a European Security and Defence Identity within the Alliance. In this spirit the role of the OSCE as a primary instrument for preventing conflict, strengthening security and advancing democracy and human rights is also underlined. They also take note of the positive contribution towards this goal of subregional economic and political structures, such as the CEI, SECI, the Royaumont process, the Black Sea Economic Cooperation and the South-Eastern European Foreign Ministers Conference.

9. The Ministers welcome NATO's declared intention to extend further invitations in coming years to democratic countries willing and able to assume the responsibilities and obligations of the membership, whose inclusion would serve the overall political and statigic interests of the Alliance and would enhance overall European security and stability. They note with satisfaction the recognition by the NATO Madrid Summit of the need to build greater stability, security and regional cooperation in the South-Eastern Europe and to promote their increasing integration into the Euro-Atlantic community.

10. The Ministers believe that the process generated in Tirana and accelerated by the Sofia Defense Ministerial[2] is an important vehicle for a closer integration with the Trans-Atlantic community, including NATO. In this framework, they could consider favourably opening of this process to other South-Eastern European countries once conditions make that appropriate.

11. They agree that the integration of Southeastern European states with European security organizations, including NATO, would be facilitated by the expansion of regional defense cooperation and confidence- and security-building measures.

12. The Ministers stress that the strengthening of the civilian control of military forces and their adaptation through restructuring so as to achieve improved interoperability with NATO are essential qualifications for membership in the Alliance and other western institutions.

13. They welcome the establishment of the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council[3], which provides an overarching framework for consultations among its members on a broad range of political and security related issues. The Ministers agree that the regional dimension of the EAPC process will increase the scope for consultations and cooperation on these issues thus forming an essential element in the common endeavour of their countries to enhance security and stability in the region of South-Eastern Europe.

14. Recalling The Basic Document of the EAPC and the Madrid Declaration on Euro-Atlantic Security and Cooperation, the Ministers declare their governments' support and readiness to contribute to the development of concrete initiatives for an enhanced EAPC cooperation in South-Eastern Europe and the Black sea region to address security risks and challenges.

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[2] Hereinafter referred to as SDM
[3] Hereinafter referred to as EAPC

15. The Ministers emphasize the importance of enhanced regional defence cooperation in the framework of PfP. Participation in peacekeeping efforts, joint civil emergency planning, disaster relief activities and coordinated measures to strengthen environmental security are seen as key elements of such cooperation.

16. Following their thorough discussions, the Ministers agree to advance a set of activities and measures specified in the Annex to this Joint Statement, as concrete next steps in their governments' cooperation.

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17. The Ministers agree that Ministerials should take place on a yearly basis in order to streamline and enhance regional cooperation. The next meeting will be held in Skopje in October 1998.

THE SOFIA DEFENCE MINISTERIAL FOLLOW-UP MEASURES AND ACTIVITIES

This Annex constitutes an integral part of the SDM Joint Statement and contains concrete measures and activities following SDM. It is open for further discussions and clarifications on expert level. It can be adapted on bilateral or multilateral basis among SDM participating states, according to their needs .

INTEGRATION INTO WESTERN INSTITUTIONS

Defence planning seminars on adaptation/downsizing of military forces to achieve NATO interoperability.

Meetings of experts on matters related to qualification and use of civilians in the defence establishment.

Distant and on site courses for senior level officers on the civilian control of the military forces.

Meetings of senior level experts on matters related to how to increase the participation of the countries of the region of South-Eastern Europe in EAPC/enhanced PfP.

CONFIDENCE AND SECURITY BUILDING MEASURES

Meetings of South-Eastern CHODS's and Deputy MODs to discuss regional defence cooperation and other security issues of regional concern.

Arrangement to post staff officers in each other GSs/DSs/MODs.

Meetings of experts to develop measures to enhance the transparency among the states through an increase in quantity and quality of data exchange on defence budgets, force structure, and PARP information.

Small unit exchanges for national exercises with neighbouring countries.

Ministry support for common measures to prevent illegal immigration, drugs and illicit arms trafficking, international terrorism, proliferation of weapons of mass

destruction, smuggling etc. (i.e. joint border patrols, information exchange, etc.), as appropriate in cooperation with other authorities.

Reflection on the way to tackle CSBM and regional arms control also in the light of the upcoming exercise on Article V, Annex 1-B of Dayton

Establishment of a telephone hotline system between the CHODs/MODs of the participating states.

REGIONAL DEFENCE COOPERATION

Civil emergency planning seminars on expert level to share experience and information on NATO/PfP requirements.

Defence planning/Force restructuring seminars on expert level to share experience and information on NATO/PfP requirements.

Regular meetings of high level officers dealing with training, equipment, personnel etc. related to civil emergency planning and disaster relief.

Establishment of Joint Staff/units/formations on bilateral or multilateral basis, including the establishment of joint peacekeeping contingents.

Establishment of a Regional PfP/CSBMs Coordination Center (Situation Center), as well as regional training centers within the framework of PfP.

Consideration of the possibility of establishing regional conflict prevention and crisis management center.

Joint PfP exercises and joint exercises "in the spirit" of PFP.

Meetings of experts on regular basis to discuss and share information and experience on matters related to the PARP, the interoperability objectives, the introduction of NATO's standards in military forces.

Participation in Peacekeeping operations under the auspices of the NATO.

Activities on assessing regional infrastructure maintenance and construction according to NATO's standards.

Joint training activities (seminars, exercises etc.) on hazardous waste management, pollution prevention and environmental clean-up.

Consultations and discussions on bilateral and multilateral basis on initiatives of enhanced cooperation in the framework of EAPC in South-Eastern Europe and the Black sea region.

Crisis management seminars.